



Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 26 February 2008

Current Nationwide



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- According to the Associated Press, Two United Airlines planes are being inspected after their wings touched at Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C. Officials say there are no reports of injuries. A spokesman for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority says a Boeing 737 and a smaller Embraer aircraft were preparing for departure Sunday evening when their wings touched. (See item [10](#))
- The Washington Post reports the number of U.S. Park Police officers has dropped to a 20-year low, with widespread vacancies in senior ranks, leaving the agency strapped, despite heightened concern about protecting the nation's landmarks from terrorism, according to officers and a watchdog group. (See item [30](#))

DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *February 25, Associated Press* – (Texas) **BP leads U.S. in refinery deaths.** Nearly three years after a massive explosion killed 15 people at BP's Texas City refinery, the oil giant continues to have more fatal accidents at U.S. refineries than any other major energy company, according to a newspaper analysis. The Texas City plant remains the nation's deadliest refinery, with three deaths since the March 2005 disaster, despite a \$1 billion cleanup and more than \$20 million in fines. The accidents have caught the

attention of the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, which investigates serious industrial accidents. “We are clearly concerned by the frequency of deaths at this refinery,” said a member of the safety board. “The apparent rate of fatalities is now higher than it was prior to March 2005.” Two other workers died at BP PLC’s refinery in Cherry Point, Washington, in 2005 and 2007. By contrast, the nation’s other 146 refiners together had nine deaths between 2005 and 2008. A BP spokesman said the company’s \$1 billion investment in safety and a steady stream of repair and upgrades have reduced injury rates in Texas City. “While we are making progress at Texas City, these deaths are a reminder that we have more to do,” he said.

Source: <http://www.theeagle.com/texas/Newspaper--BP-leads-U-S--in-refinery-deaths>

2. *February 24, Associated Press* – (National) **Wind energy hasn’t blown in enough workers.** Last year, wind farms installed almost 3,200 turbines, boosting the nation’s wind-energy capacity by 45 percent and cranking out an additional 5,200 megawatts, or enough electricity to power 1.5 million homes for a year. The industry, which now accounts for a little more than 1 percent of the U.S. electric supply, expects to repeat that surge in 2008. But wind-power officials see a large obstacle coming in the form of its own work force, a highly specialized group of technicians that combines working knowledge of mechanics, hydraulics, computers, and meteorology with the willingness to climb 200 feet in the air in all kinds of weather. That work force is not keeping up with the future demand, partly because the industry is so new that the oldest independent training programs are less than five years old. The American Wind Energy Association, a Washington, D.C.-based trade group, estimates the industry employs about 20,000 people, not including those making turbines or other equipment. Future need is harder to quantify, given the uncertainties of the industry’s growth. But with two-man teams generally responsible for seven to ten turbines, the industry would need up to 800 technicians to serve the turbines expected to be installed this year alone. “Finding experienced techs is impossible with wind growing as fast as it is,” said the supervisor of a 56-wind turbine operation. “You get one year’s worth of experience, and it’s like dog years.”

Source:

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/business/technology/2004197483_jobswind24.html

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Chemical Industry Sector

3. *February 24, Free Press* – (Michigan) **State is out of money to clean up remaining toxic sites.** With a bond program that has provided up to \$100 million a year to clean up hundreds of toxic sites across Michigan out of cash, the state’s top environmental official says he wants voters this fall to approve a replacement. Cleanup of the sites has been crucial to allowing redevelopment in Detroit and across the state. The state still has more than 5,000 so-called orphan sites, those that are contaminated but where there is no viable owner to pick up cleanup costs. When owners can be found, the state forces them to pay. The state has been telling communities it cannot accept new sites. The depletion of the cleanup fund is ironic with Detroit hosting a national brownfields conference in

May to showcase the state's achievements. A spokeswoman for a state governor said she is aware of the problem and the possibility that a new bond might be needed. Michigan's rich manufacturing history has left a legacy of environmental contamination, since there were virtually no environmental regulations until the 1960s and 1970s. Under a 1995 state law, companies are liable for cleaning up contamination at a site they may own only if they caused it. Companies that caused the contamination often are out of business or cannot be found. In those cases, the state has to step in to do the work, or the property will sit idle -- and contaminated -- for decades.

Source:

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080224/NEWS05/802240681>

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Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector

4. *February 25, Courier-Journal* – (Kentucky) **State might end nuclear plant ban.** Three state legislators are trying to overturn a nearly-quarter-century ban on nuclear power in Kentucky, as the nuclear industry vies for a comeback. Two companion bills – one in the Senate, the other in the House – would remove a requirement stipulating that before any nuclear plant is built, there must be a permanent disposal facility to handle its radioactive waste. The existing law effectively puts a moratorium on nuclear power in Kentucky, since there is no permanent disposal facility in the U.S. But the legislation would allow nuclear power plants in Kentucky as long as they have a waste-disposal plan that complies with federal law, such as securing the waste at the plants. Two state senators acknowledged that the bill could help constituents involved in the nuclear fuel industry, but they also said they are looking to help the nation and Kentucky diversify their energy supplies. The bills were opposed last week by the Kentucky Resources Council, an environmental advocacy group.

Source: [http://www.courier-](http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080225/NEWS0101/802250392)

[journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080225/NEWS0101/802250392](http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080225/NEWS0101/802250392)

5. *February 24, Asbury Park Press* – (New Jersey) **Outages cut radiation monitors' data stream.** New Jersey, which still had five radiation monitors not working on and around the Oyster Creek nuclear plant site in Lacey last week, is confronting a new problem: repeated Internet outages. Internet failures at the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) last month disrupted the flow of data from a wireless radiation monitor near Oyster Creek, according to a DEP report. And the DEP plans to install wireless technology at 30 other monitors around the four nuclear power plants in New Jersey – Salem 1 and 2, Hope Creek, and Oyster Creek – by July, according to state officials. "The loss of communications to the...wireless radiation monitoring stations around the four nuclear generating stations results in the critical loss of an emergency response capability," the DEP report says. "This is being raised as a Hot Issue to the Commissioner," the report says. While the radiation monitors can be used to provide early notice of an elevated radiation level, they are not the only source of that information, a DEP official said. "So there isn't any one system which is the be-all and end-all of monitoring," she said. "We depend on many systems. It's a whole network" of monitoring.

Source:

<http://www.app.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080224/NEWS/802240370/1070/NEWS02>

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

6. *February 23, Associated Press* – (National) **B-2 stealth bomber crashes on Guam.** A B-2 stealth bomber plunged to the ground shortly after taking off from an air base in Guam on Saturday, but both pilots ejected safely, Air Force officials said. The aircraft was taking off with three others on their last flight out of Guam after a four-month deployment, part of a continuous U.S. bomber presence in the western Pacific. After the crash, the other three bombers were being kept on Guam. At least one B-2 bomber had taken off safely from Andersen Air Force Base but was brought back when another aircraft plunged to the ground. There were no injuries on the ground or damage to buildings, and no munitions were on board. A board of officers will investigate what caused the bat-like aircraft to crash at 10:30 a.m., shortly after taking off from a runway. It was the first crash of a B-2 bomber, said a spokeswoman for Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia. All 21 stealth bombers are based at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri, but the Air Force has been rotating several of them through Guam since 2004, along with B-1 and B-52 bombers. The bombers on Guam were scheduled to return to Missouri now that six B-52s from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, have arrived to replace them.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23302483/>

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Banking and Finance Sector

7. *February 25, Wall Street Journal* – (International) **Theft of tax data hits bank clients around globe.** Liechtenstein's largest financial group confirmed that stolen client data believed to be fueling a major German tax-evasion probe included confidential information on thousands of customers and beneficiaries in other countries. The disclosure by LGT Group further undermines the tiny principality's reputation as a discreet tax haven and comes amid growing pressure from other countries to roll back banking-secrecy laws in order to clamp down on cross-border tax dodgers. LGT said the theft affected 1,400 customers, 600 of whom were German, and 4,527 beneficiaries of the foundations. LGT added that it believes Germany's foreign-intelligence agency bought the data from intermediaries or a 42-year-old former employee, who stole data earlier this decade at LGT Treuhand AG, a unit that sets up foundations. Tax authorities in at least five other countries -- the U.S., U.K., France, Canada and Australia -- are investigating client data tied to LGT, according to a person involved in international inquiries into the bank. A U.S. senator said Thursday that the bank "apparently harbored numerous secret accounts which hid the taxable assets of thousands" of people around the globe. Liechtenstein derives about 30 percent of its gross domestic product from financial services and has accused Germany of attacking the principality's sovereignty

by paying for stolen banking data.

Source:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB120389617431389345.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

8. *February 25, Wall Street Journal* – (National) **Iranian Central Bank targeted by the U.S.** The U.S. is putting together a case against Iran's Bank Markazi that could prompt penalties that further isolate the country, the Wall Street Journal reports. The U.S. has rarely moved against foreign central banks, but Bank Markazi, the Journal notes, differs from the Fed and some other counterparts in that it is part of the governing regime and includes the Iranian intelligence minister on its Money and Credit Council. Treasury officials say the bank is helping other institutions get around U.S. economic sanctions, and the Bank Markazi governor acknowledged this month during a speech in London that it "assists Iranian private and state-owned banks to do their commitments regardless of the pressure on them." Citing financial-intelligence officials in three countries, the Journal says the Treasury accuses Bank Markazi of handling U.S.-dollar transactions for blacklisted private banks and helping them by "backing their existing dollar-denominated letters of credit."

Source:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB120392365629490151.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

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Transportation Sector

9. *February 25, Bloomberg* – (National) **Texas ship channels closed to tanker traffic by fog.** The Houston Ship Channel, which serves the largest U.S. petroleum port, has been closed to vessel traffic because of fog. Ship channels along a 360-mile stretch of coast west from Lake Charles, Louisiana, to Corpus Christi, Texas, have been closed to deep-draft ship traffic by their respective pilots organizations, according to the U.S. Coast Guard. The channels and the ports they serve provide feedstock to refineries representing 30 percent of U.S. oil-processing capacity, according to data from the plant owners and the National Petrochemical and Refiners Association. Pilots organizations for Houston, Texas City-Galveston, Sabine, Freeport, Calcasieu, and Aransas-Corpus Christi have all suspended boarding, which has delayed 54 vessels. Ship pilots guide oil tankers and other vessels through the channels to port. It takes two to three days before a shutdown begins to affect operations at area refineries. Houston has the second-biggest port of any kind by tonnage. Two of the nation's four largest oil refineries are in the Houston area, according to the Greater Houston Partnership.

Source:

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601072&sid=aFmbzOILFwMY&refer=energy>

10. *February 25, Associated Press* – (District of Columbia) **Wings from United Airlines planes collide at Washington, D.C. area airport.** Two United Airlines planes are being inspected after their wings touched at Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C. Officials say there are no reports of injuries. A spokesman for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority says a Boeing 737 and a smaller Embraer

aircraft were preparing for departure Sunday evening when their wings touched. They were on the taxiway. Emergency crews are checking for damage. The official says it is not clear whether passengers will have to evacuate either plane. The incident comes a week after a similar incident at Reagan National Airport forced 63 passengers to be evacuated from two U.S. Airways planes.

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,332188,00.html>

11. *February 25, CNN* – (International) **Activists climb onto BA jet at Heathrow.** Four Greenpeace activists climbed on top of a British Airways plane at London's Heathrow Airport on Monday to protest plans to build a third runway, the environmental group said. The protesters unveiled a banner atop the plane which reads, "Climate emergency - no third runway." Greenpeace said the activists -- two men and two women -- waited for all the passengers on the Manchester, England, to London flight to disembark before they walked through the terminal, crossed the Tarmac, and climbed stairs onto the plane's fuselage. A Heathrow spokesman said it was investigating the "unlawful protest" and called the actions of the group "irresponsible." Wednesday is the deadline for the government's public consultation on whether a third runway should be built. Opponents complain of the environmental impact, noise, pollution, and destruction to local property a third runway would have. The airport disagreed with the need for the protest.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/europe/02/25/heathrow.protest/index.html>

12. *February 25, Daily Mail* – (International) **Airport security fears after investigators blow hole in plane's fuselage using liquid explosives.** Serious questions over airport security were raised Monday by an experiment, which found bomb components could be smuggled on to a plane. An investigation made a device using colorless and odorless chemicals, which can be carried through security in the 100 ml containers permitted by current regulations. Mixed together in a 500 ml water bottle and primed with a detonator, it caused an explosion, which ripped a six-foot hole in the fuselage of a decommissioned plane - enough damage to bring down a jet in flight. The test, performed by researchers for Channel 4's Dispatches program and the Evening Standard, exposes potentially disastrous loopholes in the security regime introduced after the alleged "liquid bomb" plot in August 2006. The revelation raises concerns over how effectively air passengers are being protected by security regulations in the wake of an alleged al Qaeda plot to blow up transatlantic jets with "liquid bombs." The editor of the International Journal of Aviation Security said current checks were "theatre" and that X-ray machines were no deterrent to a bomber. "I cannot cite a single example of a bomb being found using an airport X-ray machine alone," he said. Only about 400ml in total of the liquids would be needed to make the bomb, meaning two or three terrorists could carry it through security in the permitted quantities without raising suspicion. The explosion was initiated with a commercial detonator, but a scientist said a home-made one, which could also be carried through security in an electrical item such as a phone or iPod, would produce the same effect. The bomb was tested the at Lasham airfield in Hampshire, England, on a section of fuselage from a decommissioned passenger jet that was still fitted out with seats and other cabin furniture.

Source:

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=518532&in_page_id=1770

13. *February 25, USA Today* – (National) **TSA struggles to reduce persistent turnover.**

Airport security screeners have some of the worst job turnover of federal workers despite a \$100-million effort to improve salaries and work duties, a USA Today analysis of federal data shows. One in five screeners left between October 1, 2006, and September 30, 2007, federal Office of Personnel Management figures show. The turnover rate was identical the year before. Attrition for the rest of the federal government was 8 percent in 2006-07. Screener departures leave airport checkpoints “chronically short-handed,” says a former Transportation Security Administration employee, who last month left her full-time screener job at San Jose International Airport. A TSA spokeswoman said the turnover is “manageable” and does not weaken security or slow the screening process because screeners get 180 hours of training when they are hired. However, the TSA acknowledged an attrition problem in April 2006 when it launched a job-retention program. The agency paid screeners \$72 million in merit raises, awarded \$18 million in bonuses and created new jobs with added responsibilities and training.

Source: http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2008-02-24-tsa_N.htm?csp=34

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Postal and Shipping Sector

14. *February 23, WRTV 6 Indianapolis* – (Indiana) **4 taken to hospital in envelope scare.**

A Lawrence boy became ill after opening an envelope that may have contained powder Friday night, prompting emergency personnel to take him and three relatives to a hospital, officials said. No irritants appeared to be on the envelope, but investigators will take a closer look, the county health department said. Officials said the boy went to a mailbox at his home, saw an envelope addressed to him, and opened it. Powder came out of the envelope and made the boy sick, his mother told police. The mother called 911, and hazardous-materials personnel responded, setting up a tent where the mother and two other relatives were decontaminated. The boy and the other three were taken to a hospital; information on the child’s condition and details about his illness were not available. Postal inspectors were investigating the incident. Officials said the envelope had no return address.

Source: <http://www.theindychannel.com/news/15385516/detail.html>

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Agriculture and Food Sector

15. *February 25, Times and Democrat* – (National) **USDA official says failure to pass farm bill would be ‘catastrophic’.**

A new farm bill, which establishes the federal relationship with agriculture, from subsidies to conservation, has been in the works since last year. Both the House and Senate have versions. Subsidies for farmers have been an

issue, with the president wanting them reduced while Congress is reluctant to do so. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Undersecretary, speaking recently in Nevada, offered a measure of hope that an impasse over the farm bill can be broken. While Congress could extend the current farm bill for two years, the President of the American Farm Bureau Federation says this would "further erode the budget for farm programs, making it even more difficult in the future to write a bill with a meaningful safety net for America's farmers and ranchers." Some in Congress are threatening to bypass an extension and allow farm policy to revert to permanent statutes last updated in 1949. That could cause major problems for the dairy and soybean industries, among others, and would eliminate newer programs designed to protect environmentally sensitive land and extra dollars for the fruit and vegetable industries.

Source: <http://www.timesanddemocrat.com/articles/2008/02/25/business/12963094.txt>

16. *February 24, Reuters* – (California) **Meatpacker to shut down permanently after recall.** Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co, which issued the biggest meat recall in U.S. history last week, will likely shut down permanently. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced that the Hallmark/Westland Meat Packing Co. was recalling 143 million pounds of meat, mostly beef, after plant workers were caught on videotape forcing unfit cattle into the slaughterhouse. "I don't see any way we could reopen," the company's general manager was quoted as saying in a phone interview.

Source:

http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20080224/us_nm/hallmark_westland_meat_dc;_ylt=AuTX76QTywG2qbcvMMOMWxEWIr0F

17. *February 23, Des Moines Register* – (Iowa) **Contaminated biotech corn grown in Iowa.** Some Dow AgroSciences corn seed grown in Iowa in 2006 and 2007 was contaminated with small amounts of an unapproved biotech variety, the company and government officials said Friday. Federal officials said that there was no risk to humans or livestock from the grain and that there was no need to recall it. However, Dow has recalled contaminated seed that was sold for the 2008 crop. This is the latest in a series of incidents in which unapproved biotech varieties of corn and rice have inadvertently made their way into seed or grain supplies. The first incident occurred in 2000 when a genetically modified corn variety known as StarLink was found in food products despite not having been approved for human consumption. The Dow mix-up "reinforces the fact that no one is watching this industry," said a spokesman for the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a consumer advocacy group. A U.S. Department of Agriculture spokeswoman said the latest incident is under investigation.

Source:

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080223/BUSINESS01/802230315/1030>

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Water Sector

18. *February 23, KMGH 7 Denver* – (Colorado) **Leadville residents prepare for disaster.** Federal officials made sure residents of the Village of East Fork, Colorado, were aware

of the warning siren test, as there is increasing concern a nearby mine drainage tunnel will burst. If that happens, officials said a billion gallons of toxic water would flood the community and countless others downstream. Some said the alarm, accompanied with the message “seek higher ground and use escape roads” were sufficient. Others said it was not enough. “I think it’s too quiet,” said one resident. Many who live in the Village of East Fork are particularly worried the tunnel will burst in the middle of the night and the sirens will fail. Officials hoped the sirens and subsequent emergency evacuation meeting would alleviate mounting concerns. The Environmental Protection Agency has secured the \$1.5 million needed to install a well and pump in the tunnel to ease the 200-foot deep groundwater buildup, but work is still six weeks away.

Source: <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/15385682/detail.html>

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

19. *February 25, International Herald Tribune* – (International) **4th avian flu death suspected in Guangdong Province.** Health authorities tightened surveillance measures against avian influenza in Guangdong Province Monday following the fourth death in mainland China suspected to have been caused by the virus since late last year. Hospitals will be required to step up monitoring and reporting of patients with symptoms of pneumonia over a four-week period from Tuesday amid concerns of a renewed outbreak of the deadly H5N1 virus. A 44-year-old woman died Monday in the southern Chinese province of Guangdong from an infection suspected to have been bird flu, Chinese and Hong Kong health officials said. A test by the Center for Disease Prevention and Control in Guangdong found the woman to have been infected with the virus, but the result had yet to be confirmed by the Health Ministry in Beijing. Her death follows several confirmed cases of bird flu infection since December. Since mid-December, health and agriculture authorities in Hong Kong have been on heightened alert for cases of bird flu in humans and poultry. They have advised airlines and the travel industry to distribute information to travelers going to and from Jiangsu. In a statement announcing additional measures Monday, the health authorities said they had alerted “frontline staff of hospitals and clinics to step up all infection control measures and maintain vigilance.”

Source: <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2008/02/25/asia/flu.php>

20. *February 23, Arizona Daily Star* – (Arizona) **You could be one of thousands with measles exposure.** A search is under way for thousands possibly exposed to measles at Northwest Medical Center in Tucson, Arizona, last week. Any visitor or patient at that hospital between February 12 and 15 may have come in contact with a European tourist who had the highly contagious disease and sought care at Northwest. Though now rare in the United States due to high childhood vaccination rates, the measles virus spreads easily through the air and is considered one of the most contagious of all infectious diseases. The unidentified infected patient was an adult visiting Tucson from Switzerland who became ill on February 12 and went to Northwest’s emergency room that day to obtain medication. The patient, feeling no better, returned the next morning and was admitted to the hospital. Infection with measles was not confirmed until late

February 15, when the patient was finally placed in isolation, ending exposure to others at the hospital. In addition to the thousands of patients and visitors to Northwest during this period, as many as 1,800 staff members at the hospital may have been exposed to measles and are being monitored for symptoms.

Source: <http://www.azstarnet.com/metro/226484>

Government Facilities Sector

21. *February 24, Stars and Stripes* – (International) **German cop thwarts possible breach of base.** German and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) authorities are searching for at least two men suspected of assaulting a local policeman who caught them lurking outside the Geilenkirchen Air Base fence in Germany. Investigators later found the fence had been breached, according to U.S. and German authorities. The incident occurred at about 8:35 p.m. on February 15. The men “might have been trying to gain access to the base,” said a base spokesman. “The fence had been cut.” However, authorities are not sure if the fence was damaged before the incident. Both the base spokesman and a police spokesman for the Heinsberg District said that at this stage of the investigation, there is no clear evidence of terrorist activity. Protesters have tried to gain access to the base in the past, the base spokesman noted. The 46-year-old German police officer spent one night in a local hospital for a head injury. His service revolver, cell phone, and some personal items were stolen. Located near the Dutch border near Aachen, the NATO base is home to the alliance’s Airborne Warning and Control System fleet.

Source: <http://www.stripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=52773>

22. *February 23, WISC 3 Madison* – (Wisconsin) **UW-Madison building evacuated due to chemical spill.** A building on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus was evacuated Friday afternoon after several gallons of chemicals were spilled. The Madison Fire Department responded at 3:48 p.m. Friday to a report of a chemical spill on the 12th floor of the Engineering Research Building. “The chemists heard a ‘pop,’ and they left the room and evacuated. Nobody was injured,” said a spokeswoman for the Madison Fire Department. Crews evacuated the building when they arrived at the scene. The Hazardous Material Team was called in and found that several containers of nitric acid, hydrofluoric acid, hydrochloric acid, acetic acid, and ammonia were spilled. The Madison Fire Department turned the incident over to UW Safety, which has the ability to clean up this type of incident. Authorities said no one was injured and that everyone was allowed to return to the building Friday evening.

Source: <http://www.channel3000.com/news/15382003/detail.html>

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Emergency Services Sector

23. *February 25, Inside GNSS* – (National) **Geospatial Dimensions of Emergency Response Symposium announced.** According to a statement released today, a symposium addressing the application of GIS, GPS, remote sensing and other mapping technologies to emergency and disaster response will be held between March 9 and March 12 in Seattle, Washington. “Sponsored by the Geospatial Information and Technology Association (GITA), this symposium will take place in conjunction with the Geospatial Infrastructure Solutions Conference (formerly GITA Annual Conference). The two events will share registration, an exhibit floor, and social events.” For more information on the event, see: <http://gita.org/events/annual/31/ers.asp>. Source: <http://www.insidegnss.com/node/387>

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Information Technology

24. *February 25, IDG News Service* – (International) **YouTube blames Pakistani ISP for global site outage.** Many users around the world could not access the YouTube site for about two hours on Sunday. The company blamed the outage on erroneous routing information introduced by a Pakistani Internet service provider. Pakistani authorities ordered ISPs there to block the site on Friday. Traffic to YouTube was misrouted for around two hours, rendering the site inaccessible for many users around the world, YouTube said on Monday. “We have determined that the source of these events was a network in Pakistan,” the company said, adding that it is still investigating the problem to prevent it from happening again. The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) ordered the country’s ISPs to block users access to YouTube on Friday because of an inflammatory anti-Islamic video on the site, a representative of the Association of Pakistan Internet Service Providers said in a telephone interview on Monday. If the video is provocative, then it is better it is removed, rather than provoke unrest in Pakistan, he said, adding that he did not know the contents of the video. Access to YouTube is still blocked in Pakistan while the ISPs work with the PTA to narrow its order to block a single URL (Uniform Resource Locator) pointing to the video, he said. He expects the PTA to make an order to that effect later on Monday. Source: http://www.infoworld.com/archives/emailPrint.jsp?R=printThis&A=/article/08/02/25/YouTube-blames-Pakistani-ISP-for-global-site-outage_1.html
25. *February 24, Computerworld* – (National) **Critical VMware bug lets attackers zap ‘real’ Windows.** A critical vulnerability in VMware Inc.’s virtualization software for Windows lets attackers escape the “guest” operating system and modify or add files to the underlying “host” operating system, the company has acknowledged. As of Sunday, there was no patch available for the flaw, which affects VMware’s Windows client virtualization programs, including Workstation, Player and ACE. The company’s virtual machine software for Windows servers and for Mac- and Linux-based hosts are not at risk. The bug was reported by Core Security Technologies, makers of the penetration-testing framework CORE IMPACT, said VMware in a security alert issued last Friday. “Exploitation of this vulnerability allows attackers to break out of an isolated guest system to compromise the underlying host system that controls it,” claimed Core

Security. According to VMware, the bug is in the shared-folder feature of its Windows client-based virtualization software. Shared folders let users access certain files – typically documents and other application-generated files – from the host operating system and any virtual machine on that physical system. “On Windows hosts, if you have configured a VMware host-to-guest shared folder, it is possible for a program running in the guest to gain access to the host’s complete file system and create or modify executable files in sensitive locations,” confirmed VMware. VMware has not posted a fix, but it instead told users to disable shared folders.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9064319&source=rss_topic17

26. *February 23, Computerworld* – (National) **Hackers ramp up Facebook, MySpace attacks.** Hackers are actively exploiting an Internet Explorer plug-in that’s widely used by Facebook Inc. and MySpace.com members with a multi-attack kit, a security company warned Friday. The exploit directed at Aurigma Inc.’s Image Uploader, an ActiveX control used by Facebook, MySpace and other social networking sites to allow members to upload photos to their profiles, is just one of five in a new hacker tool kit being used by several Chinese attack sites, said Symantec Corp. Attacks begin when users receive spam or an instant message with an embedded link, said the Symantec analyst who authored the advisory. The link takes users to a bogus MySpace log-in page, which tries to steal members’ credentials as it also silently probes the their computers for vulnerabilities in Uploader, Apple Inc.’s QuickTime, Windows and Yahoo Music Jukebox. Although the Windows and QuickTime bugs were patched eight and 13 months ago, respectively, the Uploader and Yahoo vulnerabilities were made public and fixed only within the past few weeks. The Symnatec analyst noted the hackers’ fast reaction times. “[This demonstrates] how quickly attackers are leveraging new vulnerabilities,” he said. “It is unlikely that attackers will stop trying to leverage this vulnerability any time soon.” Symantec urged users to update the Image Uploader ActiveX control to Version 4.5.57.1.

Source:

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=security&articleId=9064298&taxonomyId=17&intsrc=kc_top

27. *February 22, Techworld.com* – (National) **Hackers turn Google into vulnerability scanner.** The hacking group Cult of the Dead Cow (CDC) this week released a tool that turns Google into an automated vulnerability scanner, scouring Web sites for sensitive information such as passwords or server vulnerabilities. CDC first achieved notoriety 10 years ago with its backdoor Back Orifice, which demonstrated in a highly public way just how easy it was to take unauthorized control of a Windows PC. The new tool, called Goolag Scan, is equally provocative, making it easy for unskilled users to track down vulnerabilities and sensitive information on specific Web sites or broad Web domains. This capability should serve as a wake-up call for system administrators to run the tool on their own sites before attackers get around to it, according to CDC. “We’ve seen some pretty scary holes through random tests with the scanner in North America, Europe, and the Middle East. If I were a government, a large corporation, or anyone

with a large website, I'd be downloading this beast and aiming it at my site yesterday," said a CDC representative. The tool is a stand-alone Windows .Net application, licensed under the open source GNU General Public License, which provides about 1,500 customized searches under categories such as "vulnerable servers," "sensitive online shopping information," and "files containing juicy information."

Source:

http://www.infoworld.com/archives/emailPrint.jsp?R=printThis&A=/article/08/02/22/Hackers-turn-Google-into-vulnerability-scanner_1.html

Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at soc@us-cert.gov or visit their Website: <http://www.us-cert.gov>.

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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Communications Sector

28. *February 24, IDG News Service* – (National) **Wireless broadband test continues.** A wireless broadband device tested by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission for interference with television and wireless microphone signals has not failed, as a broadcasting group claimed last week, members of the White Spaces Coalition say. The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) on February 11 said a so-called prototype device submitted by Microsoft lost power during tests being run by the FCC. The power failure comes after another white spaces device malfunctioned in tests run by the FCC last year. But a tech advisor to the White Spaces Coalition and a former chief of the FCC's Office of Engineering and Technology said that while the device's power supply failed after many hours of continuous testing, it did not interfere with television signals due to the power failure. The White Spaces Coalition, including Microsoft, Philips, Dell and Google, is asking the FCC to allow wireless devices to operate in the so-called white spaces of the television spectrum, space allocated for television signals but vacant. The coalition wants the white spaces opened up to give consumers more wireless broadband options, and the white spaces devices would be targeted at longer-range broadband than traditional Wi-Fi. If the FCC approves the devices this year, commercial white spaces wireless devices could be available as soon as late 2009. The FCC's in-house testing of four devices will continue for a couple more weeks, then the agency will conduct field tests for up to eight weeks. A second white spaces device has experienced no power failure problems, said the coalition's advisor.

Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/pcworld/20080224/tc_pcworld/142762

29. *February 22, Telecom Asia* – (International) **Cable cuts raise security questions.** The

security of the international submarine cable networks has been called into question by the severe disruptions caused by the recent series of cable cuts in the Mediterranean Sea. Those disruptions affected internet and phone services between Europe, the Middle East and South Asia. While services on the four broken undersea cables was restored by February 10, analysts suggest that the successive damage of these cables highlights the increased importance of reliability in the world's undersea cable networks, which carry over 95 percent of the world's international internet and telephone traffic. For years cable owners have been working hard to minimize accidental damage with different methods, such as making cable routes available to those that need to know (such as fishermen, navies and research vessels) and deliberately avoiding placing cables in high risk areas. Despite this, there is an unspoken assumption that the networks are safe from deliberate human sabotage. The recent spate of cable failures, however, has called this assumption into question, said a senior analyst at Ovum RHK. Conspiracy theories have gained ground quickly in cyberspace, despite cable owners' claims that the cables were severed by ship anchors. The Ovum RHK analyst said while there could be several cause for the outages, there is the possibility of human attack, given the geographic position and the fact that undersea cables are a ripe target for those with an interest in wreaking havoc on international communications, whatever their motivation. "If ports, railways, gas pipelines and other types of networks are being secured against possible sabotage, we must similarly increase the security of undersea optical highways," the analyst insisted. "Guaranteeing reliability is impossible, but an improvement on current hands-off approach is long overdue."

Source: http://www.telecomasia.net/article.php?type=article&id_article=7336

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Commercial Facilities Sector

Nothing to Report.

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National Monuments & Icons Sector

30. *February 25, Washington Post* – (National) **Park Police face senior staffing shortages.** The number of U.S. Park Police officers has dropped to a 20-year low, with widespread vacancies in senior ranks, leaving the agency strapped, despite heightened concern about protecting the nation's landmarks from terrorism, according to officers and a watchdog group. The Interior Department's inspector general reported this month that the force is insufficiently trained and spread too thin in Washington and other places. Six of the agency's top 13 police positions are empty, according to several officers. Meanwhile, the number of sworn officers on the force shrank to 576 at the end of January, according to findings to be made public today by a watchdog group, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. That is a decline of 49 since 2001, the group said. The Park Police, which prides itself on being the country's oldest uniformed federal law enforcement agency, has long struggled with a tight budget. But its problems have mounted as it has absorbed anti-terrorism responsibilities since the September 11, 2001,

attacks – without the funding to keep up. Several reports in recent years have highlighted the Park Police’s difficulties in juggling anti-terrorism responsibilities with patrols of urban parks and parkways. The chief spokesman for the National Park Service, which oversees the police, said that the force is short-handed but that a “revitalization” is underway.

Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/02/24/AR2008022402170.html?nav=rss_print

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Dams Sector

31. *February 24, Lawrence Journal-World* – (Kansas) **Floods gnaw at Kansas dam safety.**

In Kansas, dams holding back floodwaters during four major disasters suffered a lot of damage in 2007. During last summer’s flooding in eastern Kansas, more than 100 dams had to use their emergency spillways. Of those, 61 were damaged with costs totaling \$2.4 million. Soil and vegetation were carried away in the water, leaving behind steep, eroded drop-offs in flood channels. One dam had an 80-foot breach, and another lost part of a wall in front of its spillway. A member of the Natural Resources Conservation Service said he does not know of any repairs that have been made to the dams since the flooding. Repairing dams would require filling the eroded flood channels with soil and plants, changing the slope or location of the spillway, or covering the spillway with a hard surface such as rocks or concrete. Perhaps the dam with the most expensive repairs from last year’s flooding was Cedar Creek Valley Reservoir, which supplies the city of Garnett with its drinking water. It is expected to cost \$645,000 to repair. On June 30 after getting hammered with rain, almost half of a 400-foot wall in front of the dam’s spillway was ripped up and carried downstream. Rocks – some the size of cars – were deposited in nearby fields. Earth was also washed away, exposing ancient rock formations.

Source:

http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2008/feb/24/floods_gnaw_kansas_dam_safety/?city_local

32. *February 23, KFSN 30 Fresno* – (California) **Ahwahnee Dam collapses, lake disappears.** All the water in the 20-acre pond disappeared when the earthen wall holding it back collapsed. Madera County hopes to repair the dam, which was built more than 80 years ago when this property was part of the grounds of a state tuberculosis hospital, and refill the lake. Because this area is a key wildlife habitat, state and federal agencies are getting involved. The lake was also a convenient spot for firefighting helicopters to fill their water buckets. The Madera County engineers office says fixing this will not be easy, or cheap. Meeting federal standards for dams could mean this repair job will require a mountain of paper work, and could cost at least a million dollars.

Source: <http://abclocal.go.com/kfsn/story?section=news/local&id=5975999>

33. *February 23, Flint Journal* – (Michigan) **Committee seeks funding to repair deteriorating dam.** Engineers have warned since 1989 that the Hamilton Dam could

fail at any time, sending torrents of contaminated floodwaters through downtown Flint, Michigan, draining the city's emergency water supply and threatening businesses, homes, and lives. In 2005, the state Department of Environmental Quality ordered that if steps were not taken by 2008, the Flint River must be lowered to avoid a catastrophic dam failure. The Hamilton Dam is among Michigan's top five most dangerously aging dams. Still, local and federal funds have been long in coming, and the dam has continued to age, its cracked concrete critically deteriorated at every key point, and three of its six gates no longer working. The city of Flint has written a \$30,000 check from the city water fund to pay for a pre-engineering study on repair or replacement options from Stantec. The study is expected to be completed within 90 days, said Flint Utilities Communications Coordinator, the city's frontman on the Hamilton Dam Committee, which includes wildlife biologists, environmentalists, engineers, and city, state, and university officials.

Source: <http://www.mlive.com/news/flintjournal/index.ssf?/base/news-49/1203758418279230.xml&coll=5>

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